SELF-FURRING LATH

DSA Circular 25-1

Reference: 2001 California Building Code (CBC), Tables 25A-B

Issued 09-30-05

Discipline: Structural

This circular is intended for use by the DSA plan review engineers and field engineers to indicate an acceptable method for achieving compliance with applicable codes. Its purpose is to promote uniform statewide criteria for use in plan and construction review of projects within the jurisdiction of DSA. Other methods proposed by design professionals to solve a particular problem may be considered by DSA and reviewed for code compliance.

Purpose: The purpose of this Circular is to clarify DSA acceptance of self-furring wire lath used as reinforcement for cement plaster.

1. General: The 2001 California Building Code (CBC), Table 25A-B, Footnote 2 states: "Self-furring lath meets furring requirements. The use of self-furring lath is subject to a satisfactory jobsite demonstration for each project of the lath installation, with approval by the project architect and enforcement agency."

The previous code, the 1998 CBC, Table 25A-B, Footnote 2 prohibited the use of self-furring lath when installed over plywood sheathing or similar rigid material. Due to changes in code language in the 2001 CBC, as shown above, the use of self-furring lath, when installed over plywood sheathing or similar rigid material, is now acceptable.

2. Background: Many types of self-furring lath have depressions in the lath that successfully offset the lath 1/4 inch from plywood or other rigid backing, and therefore meet the 1/4 inch offset requirement of Table 25A-B of the CBC. Furring nails are **not** required. The lath is not offset from the backing at the location where nails or staples hold the lath to the backing/stud. However, tests have shown that the failure mechanism is not separation of the lath and plaster. Rather, failure was due to improper fastening of the lath to the framing.

3. Application: Satisfactory job-site installation is required. The lath should not be pulled so tight that the depressions are straightened resulting in the lath being pressed tight to the backing. Lath must be furred out 1/4 inch over the majority of the wall area; lath within three inches of attachment points may not be furred the required 1/4 inch in order to accommodate perimeter fastening to framing. Also, the nails/staples shall **not** be overdriven so as to damage the weather-resistant barrier.